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perfection, not only as beautiful in form and proportions, but so quivering with life that something of its intense vitality is communicated to the spectator and enhances his own existence. How profound was Puget's knowledge of anatomy, how fine his sensitiveness to beauty, and how instinct with life and movement his rendering of form, the Marsyas affords ample evidence for judgment.

No less successful was Puget in the solution of purely artistic problems. He understood how to order the elements of representation so that, independent of meaning, they please the eye. With masterly assurance he endowed his sculpture with that formal beauty which is never absent from any great work of art. His compositions abound in astonishing rhythms, in daring oppositions of movement, and subtle balances of forms. His style is in perfect accord with the turbulence of his spirit. The pose of the Marsyas is novel and expressive. The sculpture is designed to be seen from the front or sides, but not from the back; very probably it stood in a niche.

The statue is neither signed nor recorded but on the evidence of style may assuredly be attributed to Puget. The sculptor perhaps had this work in memory when at the height of his fame he wrote to Louvois, who had succeeded Colbert, describing the sculptures he wished to execute for the decoration of Versailles: "I am also meditating a group of Apollo flaying Marsyas, in order to represent a kind of anatomy; a thing highly appreciated among sculptors and painters." The date of the Marsyas may be placed fairly early in Puget's career; probably about 1659, when he was working under the patronage of Claude Girardin for his château of Vaudreuil in Normandy, or perhaps somewhat later, during his Genoese period, 1660-1667.

In concluding, it may be noted that Puget, who was born in 1620 and died in 1694, was painter and architect as well as sculptor. His works in sculpture—and it is upon these that his fame rests—are not numerous, and they are mostly treasured in public collections or churches. It is consequently a matter of congratulation

that the Museum has been able to acquire so typical a work of this great master who profoundly influenced the course of French art.
J. B.

RUGS ON EXHIBITION

THE rearrangement of the rug gallery has made it possible to assemble some twenty representative examples of Near Eastern and Indian fabrics of unusual beauty and interest.

Foremost among these, hanging on the wall at the right as one enters, is the superb tree carpet of the Williams Collection. This, with its stately cypresses delicately screened by blossoming fruit trees, stands as a monument to the poet-weavers who dwelt among the hilly slopes that border the western shore of the Caspian in the early days when leisurely caravans, undisturbed by the rush of modern commercialism, wended their way westward from the Orient. A knowledge of the topography of Persia and the adjacent territory is helpful in determining the provenance of rugs. One can readily understand that an artist, to produce a fabric replete with flora, could not have dwelt in the arid waste of Central Persia or in the rocky steppes bordering the frontier of Central Asia on the north. Just as the poets, centuries before, impelled by the beauty of their surroundings, immortalized their country in lyrics read by all succeeding generations, so the patient weavers, influenced by the same natural setting, bequeathed to us a wealth of imaginative beauty in this carpet, imperial in the dignity of its composition and exquisitely refined in its color.

This carpet, which is lent by C. F. Williams,¹ was in the Munich Exhibition of Mussulman Art in 1910, and is attributed by Martin to the beginning of the fifteenth century—about 1400,² toward the close of the Timurid period; a period that reflects the artistic attainments of great monarchs

¹From the Joseph Lees Williams Memorial Collection.

²Similar trees are found in a Mongolian manuscript of the Musée des Arts décoratifs, dated 1396.

who, with an inherent love of the beautiful and a mental vision broadened by wars of conquest, builded unto themselves monuments. Thus at Samarkand in Central Asia, at Ispahan in Central Persia, and at Ardebil in the Northwest great mosques arose, beautified by artisans and skilled craftsmen from the East; and to these Meccas the pious natives made frequent pilgrimages. That these pilgrimages often resulted in inspiration, artistic as well as spiritual, is evidenced by the recurrence of faience motives in the art of the weaver. For instance, in the splendid carpet—which like many another rare one is fragmentary¹—hanging on the north wall, we have almost in replica the trees and gazelles from a niche decoration in the mosque at Ispahan. This carpet, which also belongs to the Williams Collection, may be dated about 1480, and is unusual in that it has a green ground. The white ground with scrolled arabesques, found in rare instances in rugs of the great period, in this instance is limited to a large central medallion, the marginal field allowing ample space for the various animal forms that are grouped in combat or disport themselves among the branches of flowering fruit trees. Above the central medallion is a smaller one with confronted birds similar to those in the Schwarzenberg carpet at Vienna, dated about 1490, and also found in a later fragment (about 1550) of a hunting carpet from the Williams Collection, hanging in the adjoining gallery. This device, familiar in Early Christian art, survives also in faience of the period, as instanced in a charming lunette in the Ardebil Mosque.² Another motive of interest in this carpet is the mask or lion's head found in the heart of the small palmettes that appear in the border of the central field. The introduction of the leonine head in a carpet of this date might be attributed to the fact that the term "Haidari" (leonina) is associated in Persian

history with the great Sheikh Haidar who with his descendant Ismail (born in 1480) founded the Safavid Dynasty. Thus it might readily be a royal emblem, as even to this day the lion placed against a blazing sun appears on the national standard of Persia. While occasional weaves of the Mongolian period¹ show arabesques with animal head finials—the lion, wild boar, elephant, or stag—such types seem much more Indian in character than those here shown. These masks, distinctly Italian in character, closely parallel those found in the decorative Renaissance panels of Rosex (Nicolò da Modena), who was working in Italy toward the end of the fifteenth century.² The appearance of this Italian influence in Persian works of this period may be explained not only by the commercial intercourse between Italy and the Levant in the second half of the fifteenth century, but as well by the more intimate relations which existed between the Persian court and that of Venice through the marriage of the Venetian envoy Zeno with a princess of the ruling house. Thus in Near Eastern and Italian art one often discovers what might be termed reciprocal motives that suggest delightful avenues of interesting research.

Another great carpet dating from about 1500 is the large compartment rug hung on the east wall. This, with the famous animal rug from the Ardebil Mosque at its left and the small hunting rug at its right, was formerly in the Yerkes Collection and was purchased by the Museum in 1910.

Among the unusual features of this carpet may be mentioned its white ground and its medallion type of pattern with Chinese animal motives. When in the thirteenth century the Mongols under Jenghis Khan drove westward across Central Asia conquering Bagdad (1258) and taking all before them, this great wave of Orientalism left its imprint upon the countries through which it passed; an influence that was further developed during the Timurid

¹As all students of rugs know, in the settlement of estates in the East, it has been the custom to divide a large carpet among the heirs. Again, a fine rug may be stolen from a mosque and sold in fragments.

²See Sarre. *Denkmäler persischer Baukunst*.

¹See carpets of the Musée des Arts décoratifs and the National Museum at Stockholm illustrated by Martin, plates 89-90.

²See Guilmar. *Les Maîtres des Ornemanistes*, pl. 92.

period. Thus it is that in Persian weaves of the fifteenth century there is a constant recurrence of exotic motives blended with the arabesques and the flora of pure Persian design; as in this carpet where the dragon and phoenix, familiar in Ming porcelains, appear in medallions placed upon a ground of rich arabesque tracery, while the decorative Chinese cloud bands figure in the border.¹ The general plan of the pattern, however, with its set medallions, is a type familiar in the faience decoration of the Persian mosques, notably in the Blue Mosque at Tabriz, and in the rich bindings of the manuscripts. The famous rug from the Ardebil Mosque² comes from Northern Persia and may be dated about 1530. This, with two other carpets, was purchased by a dealer toward the end of the nineteenth century at a time when the mosque was undergoing repairs. In this the tree motive has entirely disappeared, having been supplanted by a formal arrangement of sprigs terminating in small palmettes which serve as a background for a set arrangement of animal motives—a lion and spotted deer in deadly combat—with numerous other animals scattered through the intervening spaces. Among these, repeated at intervals, is a wild boar, an animal that still infests certain regions of Persia and that from earliest times has held a prominent place as a decorative motive in the art of the Orient.³

Of the animal rug at the left of the tree carpet, the Museum owns two examples; the present specimen, presented by Alexan-

¹Another instance of this may be found in an interesting fragment, also lent by Mr. Williams, hung in the adjoining gallery (II E 14), in which the designer has introduced the Chinese type of winged genii, the most beautiful examples of which appear in the silk and gold carpet owned by the former Emperor of Austria, a fabric probably woven at the Imperial manufactories in Jazd about 1570 (see Martin, fig. 135), traceable, no doubt, to Mongolian manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (1258-1369).

²Stebbing's. The Holy Carpet of the Mosque at Ardebil, London, 1893.

³This is illustrated in the rock sculptures of Tak i bostan, where a stampede of these beasts is shown with a royal hunter in hot pursuit; a theme also exploited in the silver plate of the period. Sarre. *Iranische Fels Reliefs*, pls. XXXVIII-XXXIX.

der Smith Cochran in 1908, and its companion piece, bequeathed by Isaac D. Fletcher in 1917. These two rugs, which date from about 1600, come from Northern Persia, possibly Tabriz, and illustrate a combination of Herat and Tabriz patterns. The central medallion shows a group of orientals seated about a duck pool—a pool such as often appears in the courtyards portrayed in Persian miniatures. Above and below are confronted Chinese dragons and the *herati* motive supported by stags. The field and border are crowded with palmettes and animal forms—a lion and wild ox in combat showing the same vigorous draughtsmanship as those of the Ardebil carpet.

Turning to the Asia Minor group, the rug with the "archaic leaf pattern,"¹ hung at the right of the doorway as one enters from the corridor, is perhaps the most interesting. This, which is lent by the Estate of Theodore M. Davis, and dates from the fifteenth century, illustrates a variant of the earlier dragon rugs, its rigid leaves with serrated edges reminding one of details in the pattern of the dragon rug of the Berlin collection, a type of fifteenth-century carpet recorded in a cassone painting of a tournament in the Piazza S. Croce, preserved in the Jarves Collection at New Haven. Another Asia Minor rug of the fifteenth century hanging on the same wall has a curious pattern, which is described as a series of stepped lozenges, serrated bands of various colors placed about a small diamond-shaped central medallion, with corner quadrants decorated with archaic leaf and animal forms. This may be classed as the prototype of a pattern that persisted in Asia Minor until the eighteenth century.

On the opposite side of the room are hung two other interesting specimens of Asia Minor fabrics of the fifteenth century; one with a pattern of enclosed hexagons is similar to a picture in the S. Giovanni e Paolo at Venice, painted by Lorenzo Lotto about 1530. This rug, and the one hung on the opposite side of the doorway,

¹These forms, which have been described as leaves, may be an "archaic" rendering of a dragon and a spotted stag in combat.

are from the Williams Collection. The latter, dating from about 1500, is attributed to Syria (Damascus), although possibly it may be of Egyptian provenance. It has an octagonal field in the center placed between two oblong panels, with the entire surface covered with a small, close pattern of geometric and conventionalized floral forms.

Another Asia Minor rug from the Williams Collection is the Ushak weave hung on the west wall. This, with its blue and yellow stars outlined with yellow, is a typical Ushak fabric. A second rug of this type, and one of the finest, may be seen in Gallery II E 12, a rug in which the unusual double knot is woven in the pattern at the star points. This device appears in a manuscript of 1453 made for Shah Rukh. In Buddhistic ornament it is termed the knot of destiny and in Caucasian weaves it is often employed as a talismanic emblem. Rugs of this type are often represented in Venetian paintings of the sixteenth century and in the compositions of Dutch and Flemish masters of the seventeenth century.

The splendid Spanish carpet,¹ also hanging on the west wall, is still another from the Williams Collection. This bears the arms of the Admiral Enriques and dates from the middle of the fifteenth century. The angular drawing of the figures as compared with the animal motives of Persian weaves of the same period—for instance, in the large tree and hunting carpets of the same owner—proves the Persians to have been already past masters in the technique of weaving, while in Spain the art was yet in that stage of development where the weaver, still hampered by the vertical and horizontal threads of the warp and weft, produced only rigid outlines far removed from the exquisite arabesques that the shuttle of his fellow-craftsmen in the Near East so deftly painted upon the fabric of his loom. With the fall of Granada, however, in 1492, and the influx of master artisans from Italy who flocked to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, the art

of weaving in Spain developed rapidly, as is evidenced by the exquisite velvets produced during that brilliant period.

At the right of this rug hangs an early Hispano-Moresque carpet of geometric pattern, similar to one in the Victoria and Albert Museum, illustrated by Martin,¹ dating from about 1400, one of the earliest Spanish carpets known, and formerly attributed to Asia Minor. In this connection should be mentioned the rare Persian fabric of the Williams Collection displayed in the Persian alcove that may be entered from Gallery II E 14, a carpet which is attributed by Martin to the middle of the fourteenth century,² antedating the tree carpet already described. The stilted tree forms here shown, combined with the more or less formal medallions, mark the transition from the compartment type of pattern to the more naturalistic treatment that developed during the Timurid period.

The two large Indian carpets on either side of the great Spanish rug just described are the gift of Mr. Morgan and were numbered among the treasures of Knoll House. These, with the wonderful group of Indian rugs in the Altman Collection (II A 35-39), form a notable series and represent the finest type of carpet weaves produced in India during the best period of the art as it developed under the Mughal dynasties in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Perhaps the chief characteristic of Indian carpets is the striking color note; the rich, glowing reds, the vivid greens with touches of blue and yellow, clear, mellow tones, always suggestive of a land of brilliant sunshine, and strikingly noticeable when contrasted with the weaves of Northern Persia with their deep, rich colors that seem almost dull by comparison.

A garden carpet (fragmentary) lent by the Estate of Theodore M. Davis is displayed on a central platform. In this section we have the central pool with its diverging waterways and its four formal fruit trees spreading over highly conven-

¹Oriental Carpets. Fig. 342.

²A later carpet of similar design is preserved at Naseby House, Sweden, illustrated by Martin, Plate 1.

¹See Thomson. *Burlington Magazine*, vol. XVIII, p. 100. See Van de Put. *Burlington Magazine*, vol. XIX, p. 344.

tionalized flower beds. On one side a row of cypress trees shades another brook, with its meander pattern simulating waves, while the outer edge is bordered on two sides with the reciprocal lily motive. Carpets of this type were woven for the winter palaces, a lingering memory of the glories of summer.

Taken as a whole, the rugs here shown are representative of the greatest epochs in the art of carpet weaving and, combined with those in the Altman Collection and the Persian examples in the Fletcher bequest, comprise an exhibit of which the Museum may well be proud.

F. M.

A BRONZE RELIEF OF MEDUSA

THE development of the Medusa type is a striking illustration of the growing sense for beauty in the Greek consciousness. The Medusa is not a creation of the Greek mind, but is part of the vast inheritance which came to Greece from the Orient. With sundry other monster shapes she makes her appearance in Greek art about the seventh century B. C., not merely as a creature evolved by a fantastic imagination but rather as a deep-rooted religious conception. For evidence is accumulating that the Medusa is the direct descendant of the great nature divinities of the pre-Hellenic world—of the Minoan Snake Goddess, of the Egyptian Bes, of the Persian Artemis, and of other kindred earth spirits.¹

Medusa's long past necessitated certain features in her representation. The archaic Greek artist conceived her as a grotesque, often winged creature, with snakes in her hair, staring eyes, and protruding tongue.² But with the advance of religious and artistic conceptions the inherent Greek dislike for abnormalities as-

serted itself. In the fifth century B. C. the Oriental monster shapes either disappeared or became transformed so as to satisfy the prevalent ideal of beauty.

An excellent example of this later conception of Medusa is a bronze relief recently acquired by the Museum (fig. 1). Here all the ugly features of former days have disappeared, and a noble, beautiful type has been substituted. The characteristic features, however, have been retained, and their effect is the stronger since a subtler treatment has replaced the



FIG. 1. ORNAMENT FROM CHARIOT POLE
FRONT VIEW

former childish exaggeration. Instead of the distorted face with goggle eyes and protruding tongue, the countenance is rigidly calm; but the wide-open eyes have a fixed glare which we can better believe capable of turning men into stone, as the legend ran, than the harmless grin of earlier days—especially when the eyes shone, as they did originally, in bright silver with pupils probably of precious stones. The place of the radiating snakes is taken by the wavy locks flying loose about the head and forming a beautiful variegated framework for the face. Among the locks a pair of snakes is skilfully introduced with ends intertwined below Medusa's chin. Two small wings rising from the head are likewise rendered less conspicuous by the surrounding hair.

Our relief is beautifully worked in the refined though rather hard style of the

¹See on this subject the interesting article by A. L. Frothingham in the *American Journal of Archaeology*, XV (1911), pp. 349 ff.

²Many representations in our Museum illustrate this type; see the examples in the Third Room of the Classical Wing: on the Etruscan chariot in Case M, on the kylix G. R. 521 in Case A, on the kylix 14.136 in Case K, and the terracotta reliefs 10.210.44 and 10.210.46 in Case J.